

LOWER BIG BLUE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
October 9, 2025
7:00 P.M.

Notice of the meeting was published in accordance with Section 84-1411, Nebraska Statutes, in the Beatrice Daily Sun and the Wilber Republican. Notice was also sent to Radio Station KWBE, Crete News, and Fairbury Journal-News. In accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act, the Open Meetings Act is posted on the north wall of the meeting room for public viewing.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Duane Parde at 7:00 P.M.

Directors Present: Larry Barta, Ryan Birkett, Brent Katz, Steve Kelley, Bob Lorenz, Duane Parde, Jason Pohlmann, Dean Roehr, Jason Sand, Rodney Skleba, Chad Weichel, Bruce Weise.

Directors Absent: Doug Stokebrand.

Staff Present: Scott Sobotka, Manager; Tyler Weishahn, Assistant Manager; Scott Theis, Operations Supervisor; Nick Schroeder, GIS/IT/Data Specialist; Brandy Scholl, Gage County NRD Secretary, Programs Assistant.

Others Present: None.

CONSIDERATION OF EXCUSED ABSENCES

Doug Stokebrand has requested to be excused from the October 9th Board Meeting.

MOTION #1 was made by Brent Katz, seconded by Larry Barta, to excuse Doug Stokebrand from the October 9th Board Meeting.

YEA: Barta, Birkett, Katz, Kelley, Lorenz, Pohlmann, Roehr, Sand, Skleba, Weichel, Weise, Parde.

NAY: None. **ABSTAIN:** None.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 9, 2025, CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION #2 was made by Chad Weichel, seconded by Bruce Weise, to adopt the Consent Agenda for the October 9, 2025, Board Meeting, which includes: adoption of the agenda as submitted, approval of the September 18, 2025 meeting minutes, financial status report dated September 30, 2025, September 2025 revenues, and expenditures; Beatrice West and Wymore Rural Water financials.

YEA: Barta, Birkett, Katz, Kelley, Lorenz, Pohlmann, Sand, Skleba, Weichel, Weise, Parde. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** Roehr.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

GROUNDWATER QUANTITY RULES AND REGULATIONS

Scott stated the public hearing is scheduled for October 30, 2025, at 7:00 pm at the Gage County Fairgrounds. He further stated that comments may be submitted in writing by those individuals of the public that are unable to make the public hearing.

Scott noted that the notice of public hearing will be published in the Beatrice Daily Sun, Wilber Republican, Fairbury Journal News and Pawnee Republican.

WATER WELL PERMITS, IRRIGATION AGREEMENTS

The pending variance has been withdrawn by the applicant but may be resubmitted in the future.

NITROGEN REDUCTION COST SHARE PROGRAMS

Scott presented a summary of the proposed FY26 Nitrogen Reduction Cost Share Programs. He recommended removing the 160 acre cap on applications to ensure all funding is utilized. If applications exceed funding, a ranking process has been established to determine approval.

MOTION #3 was made by Rod Skleba, seconded by Jason Sand, to approve the FY26 Nitrogen Reduction Cost Share Program and ranking process.

YEA: Barta, Birkett, Katz, Kelley, Lorenz, Pohlmann, Roehr, Sand, Skleba, Weichel, Weise, Parde.

NAY: None. **ABSTAIN:** None.

LB/LBB NRD NINE COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Scott reported that the LBBNRD is the current applicant/sponsor for the application. JEO is assisting with the Hazard Mitigation Plan Update and a new Scope of Services is required. Discussion was had on the purpose of the plan and Scott stated a Hazard Mitigation Plan must be in place in order to be eligible for pre- and post- federal disaster funding.

MOTION #4 was made by Steve Kelley, seconded by Dean Roehr, to approve entering the Scope of Services with JEO for the Hazard Mitigation Plan Update.

YEA: Barta, Birkett, Katz, Kelley, Lorenz, Pohlmann, Roehr, Sand, Skleba, Weichel, Weise, Parde.

NAY: None. **ABSTAIN:** None.

FY2026 NRD TREE PROGRAM REVIEW

Scott Theis reviewed proposed changes to the NRD tree program for FY2026. The only proposed change is to increase the price to \$1.50/tree due to cost increases from the nurseries. He also mentioned that Halsey is currently closed due to the government shutdown.

MOTION #5 was made by Jason Sand, seconded by Chad Weichel, to approve the tree program for FY2026.

YEA: Barta, Birkett, Katz, Kelley, Lorenz, Pohlmann, Roehr, Sand, Skleba, Weichel, Weise, Parde.

NAY: None. **ABSTAIN:** None.

BUILDING COMMITTEE REPORT

Dean reviewed progress on the new office and shop construction. He presented change orders for the Board's consideration. Discussion was had regarding the change order #004R2 which includes flooring, wall-covering, and Board desk materials, and removal of the fence.

MOTION #6 was made by Dean Roehr, seconded by Steve Kelley, to approve Change Order #004R2.

YEA: Barta, Birkett, Kelley, Lorenz, Roehr, Sand, Skleba, Weichel, Weise, Parde. **NAY:** Katz. **ABSTAIN:** Pohlmann.

Dean reviewed the proposed change order regarding cabling as presented by Rogge. Discussion was had regarding previous bids received.

MOTION #7 was made by Dean Roehr, seconded by Steve Kelley, to approve the cabling change order in the amount of \$18,547.00.

YEA: Barta, Birkett, Katz, Kelley, Lorenz, Pohlmann, Roehr, Sand, Skleba, Weichel, Weise, Parde. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None.

Dean stated that the city installed the transformer near the building. Discussion was had regarding the safety of the location.

MOTION #8 was made by Larry Barta, seconded by Steve Kelley, to approve moving the transformer nearer the road and away from the building.

YEA: Barta, Birkett, Katz, Kelley, Lorenz, Pohlmann, Roehr, Sand, Skleba, Weichel, Weise, Parde. **NAY:** None. **ABSTAIN:** None.

NRD PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES REPORT

Scott discussed the federal government shutdown. Due to the shutdown, hiring of the part-time NRCS clerk position and shared NRCS position are on hold. It is also time to renew the Memorandum of Understanding with NRCS. The MOU is being reviewed by Scott and NRD staff but cannot proceed until the government reopens.

Scott informed the Board that Larry Moore is retiring as the Nebraska Citizen Advisor to the Blue River Compact Committee. He requested that anyone interested in serving or nominating someone to serve contact him.

Scott reported that a potential drowning occurred at Big Indian on September 26, 2025. Thankfully, Jason and Rod Hartig were fishing the lake when the 911 call came in and were alerted by the Wymore Fire Department Chief. The Hartigs were able to reach the drowning man, and another man who had gone in to attempt help, before tragedy struck. Jason and Rod Hartig were presented Meritorious Acts Awards from the Gage County Sheriff for their efforts.

Scott discussed the potential Tallgrass CO2 pipeline that will go through several NRD structures. He attended the County Supervisors meeting in order to meet the representatives of Tallgrass. As a result, a meeting has been scheduled between Tallgrass and NRD staff to discuss potential impacts and easements.

Scott Theis reported that Spooktacular will be held October 18, 2025, at Willard Meyer. There was also a recent fish kill at Willard Meyer.

Scott Theis stated that the SnapTite project for Plum 2E is on hold due to recent rains filling the dam. He also reported that rock has finally been received for the recreation areas.

Brandy stated that groundwater use reports have been sent out. Reports have started coming back, and calls are being received with questions.

Brandy reported on the Southeast Area Land Judging contest which was hosted by the LBB NRD on Wednesday. Over 300 students and instructors from 18 schools participated. The top 5 teams will be going on to State contest.

Scott told the Board that the budget was submitted to the State. He also stated the audit report could be given by written summary rather than Dana Cole presenting to the Board at a meeting.

Tyler mentioned that there was a leak on the WRW line due to boring in the area.

SALE OF CUT HAY FOR MAINTENANCE OF GREEN TOP WMA

Scott Theis reported that 140 bales were received by the NRD from the hay cut for maintenance of Green Top. After researching current pricing based on the quality of the hay, he recommends selling the bales at \$40/bale.

MOTION #9 was made by Dean Roehr, seconded by Jason Pohlmann, to approve the sale of 140 bales of hay from Green Top WMA for \$40/bale.

YEA: Barta, Birkett, Katz, Kelley, Lorenz, Pohlmann, Roehr, Sand, Skleba, Weichel, Weise, Parde.
NAY: None. **ABSTAIN:** None.

SWAN 31 MITIGATION PROJECT

Scott Theis reviewed the estimates received for the concrete pad replacement for the Swan 31 Mitigation Project. He has spoken with the property owner who is in agreement with the proposed replacement and has consented to either of the bidding companies being used.

MOTION #10 was made by Bruce Weise, seconded by Jason Pohlmann, to accept the low bid from ConPro LLC for the Swan 31 Mitigation project.

YEA: Barta, Birkett, Katz, Kelley, Lorenz, Pohlmann, Roehr, Sand, Skleba, Weichel, Weise, Parde.
NAY: None. **ABSTAIN:** None.

AGENCY REPORTS

NRCS

Brandy reported that NRCS office is closed due to the federal government shutdown.

EXTENSION OFFICE

No Report

NRC

Steve reported that he attended the NRC meeting on September 30th. Dave Dunbar was elected as Vice-Chairperson due to the retirement of Dan Steinkruger. The next meeting will be held February 25, 2026.

NARD

Steve reported that the committee met at the annual conference in Kearney. There were no resolutions to be taken up. Steve reviewed the current financial status of the NARD and NARD Risk Pool. Scott further stated that Nancy Brisk of the UBB NRD is retiring from her position as advisor on the Benefits Committee. Upon discussion with other managers, they are recommending Adam Kimmerling to serve on the committee.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- a. October 13th - Office Closed - Columbus Day
- b. October 30th - Groundwater Quantity Rules and Regulations Public Hearing –
Gage County Fair Grounds 7:00 p.m.
- c. November 4th – 5th - NRD Managers Meeting LENRD
- d. November 9th – 10th - NARD meeting – NPNRD
- e. November 11th - Office Closed – Veterans Day
- f. November 13th - Board Meeting 1:30 p.m.

Being no further business, Chairperson Duane Parde adjourned the meeting at 9:06 P.M.

Secretary, Jason Sand

I, the undersigned, Secretary of the Lower Big Blue Natural Resources District, hereby certify that these are true and correct minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors of the District held October 9, 2025, that all of the subjects discussed at the meeting were contained in the agenda for the meeting, kept continually current and readily available for public inspection at the principal office of the District during normal business hours, and except for items of an emergency nature, the agenda was not altered later than twenty-four (24) hours before the scheduled commencement of the meeting; that at least one copy of all reproducible material discussed at the meeting was available at the meeting for examination and copying by members of the public; that the minutes were in written form and available for public inspection within ten working days and prior to the next convened meeting for said body; and that all news media requesting notification of the meeting of said body were provided advance notification of the time and place of said meeting and the subjects to be discussed at said meeting.

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